

One Way to Heaven

Occasionally I hear people say something like, "There are many paths to Heaven." Sometimes they mean under the generic term "Christianity" (i.e. choose the church of your choice and worship like you want) and sometimes they mean any religion. Is this statement true? Let's look at the Word of God.

The Holy Bible Teaches Singularity not Plurality

The Holy Bible from cover to cover teaches singularity. A key passage would be Ephesians 4:4-6 where the apostle Paul said, "There is **one** body [church] and **one** spirit, just as you were called in **one** hope of your calling; **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism; **one** God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Many will say there are many different types of churches teaching, believing, and practicing different things because it is impossible for everyone to interpret the Bible the same. Not true when it comes to matters of salvation. Paul commanded Christians be unified when he said in I Corinthians 1:10 that Christians should all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among them, and they should be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. God has never given us an impossible command. Also, according to I Corinthians 14:33, God is not the author of confusion. He did not give us a Book that we cannot all understand. In addition, Jesus prayed that all of His followers would be one as He and the Father were one in John 17:20ff. Why would Jesus pray for something that was impossible?

The Holy Bible Teaches Christ is the Only Way

Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father [who is in Heaven] except through Me." He also said in John 8:24, "...if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." This leaves out Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, atheists, agnostics, and everyone who does not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

All Other Religions Teach a Works System

I cannot think of any religion (except Christianity) that is not based on a works system. All other religions that believe in Heaven seem to be based on earning Heaven by doing good works. As long as your good deeds outweigh your bad deeds, you get to go to Heaven. However, unless you are perfect, then you will sin. Isaiah 59:2 says our sins separate us from God. Romans 3:23 says that we all sin and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 6:23 says that the consequence of sin is spiritual death. What do other religions do to remove those sins? No other religion except Christianity needs a Savior. If any religion will get you to Heaven, how do you reconcile that? Is there one Heaven for faithful Christians who accepted that they needed Christ to die on the cross to take the blame for their sins while there is another Heaven where other religious people go because they earned their way to Heaven by doing more good deeds than bad deeds? Does this really seem logical and realistic?

The Holy Bible Teaches There is Only One Plan of Salvation

- Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith, it is impossible to please God. Romans 10:17 says that faith comes from **hearing** the Word of God (the Bible).
- Jesus said in Mark 16:15-16 that whoever **believes** and is baptized will be saved but whoever does not believe (so of course would not be baptized) will be condemned.

- Jesus said in Luke 13:3, 5 that unless people **repent** they will perish.
- Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33 that if a person **confessed** that He was the Son of God before men, He would confess that person before God. Romans 10:9 says that if a person confesses with the mouth that Jesus is the Christ and believes that He was resurrected that person would be saved.
- Jesus said in Mark 16:15-16 that whoever believes and is **baptized** will be saved. Acts 2:38, 47 says to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and that God added to the church those who were being saved. Acts 22:16 says to arise and be baptized and wash away your sins. I Peter 3:21 says that baptism saves us.
- All these passages from God make it clear that there is a process we must go through to become a Christian and be added to the church—the one church, the Lord’s church. Again, that would leave out Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, atheists, agnostics, and everyone who will not follow this plan of salvation. But it also leaves out everyone who claims to be a Christian but is a member of a church that does not teach, believe, and follow this plan of salvation and, sadly, that includes many, many churches.

The Holy Bible Teaches There is Only One Church

- Jesus said in Matthew 16:18 that He would build His church. There is only one church and it belongs to Christ. The apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 15:24 that at the end of time Christ will present to the church to God. We need to make sure and be in the right one.
- Many churches teach things such as all one must do to be saved is “accept Jesus as your Personal Savior and say the Sinner’s Prayer.” This “plan of salvation” is man-made and cannot be found in God’s Word. God will not accept a man-made plan of salvation. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 that not everyone who says “Lord, Lord” (i.e. acts religiously) will go to Heaven but only those who obey God. He also asked in Luke 6:46 why some people were calling Him “Lord, Lord” and not doing the things that He said. What do people expect from God on Judgment Day? Do they expect God to say, “You did not obey my plan of salvation and called yourself a Christian anyway but I didn’t really mean what I said so enter into Heaven.”?
- The New Testament gives us enough information to know how God wants the church be set up as far as its organizational structure, its worship services, and its function. Each congregation of the Lord’s church is to have men to serve as elders and deacons if they meet the criteria set forth in I Timothy and Titus. The Lord’s church is to meet at least every first day of the week. Its worship service is to consist of singing, praying, giving, the Lord’s Supper, and Bible study—nothing more and nothing less. Its function is to edify those who are members (i.e. help each other get to Heaven), save the lost, and do good works to help save the lost. So many churches are nothing more than spiritual social clubs, free babysitting services, social programs, or political organizations. They have offices not authorized by God such as a Pope, priests, deaconesses, etc. etc. They meet for worship on Saturdays instead of Sundays. They refuse to take the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week—lest it become meaningless. They name themselves after men such as Martin Luther. They claim miracles and claim the Holy Spirit speaks directly to them and gives them permission to change God’s Word even though I Corinthians and Galatians teaches that does not happen today. Again, what do people expect from God on Judgment Day? Do they expect God to say to them on Judgment Day, “You were a member of a man-made church that did not teach, believe, and practice what I said but I’m sure you were sincere so enter into Heaven.”? Not so. Jesus said in Matthew 15:9 that many people worship Him in vain because they teach man-made doctrines as if they were the truth.

Conclusion: According to II Timothy 3:16-17, the Word of God gives us everything we need to know to be saved. It tells us there is only one way to Heaven—through Christ. It teaches that we cannot earn our way to

Heaven by doing more good deeds than bad deeds. It teaches there is only one way to become a Christian and be added to the church—hear, believe, repent, confess, and be baptized. Finally, it teaches there is only one church and we must be in it to be saved. There are not many paths to Heaven. There is only one way to eternal life just like Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”